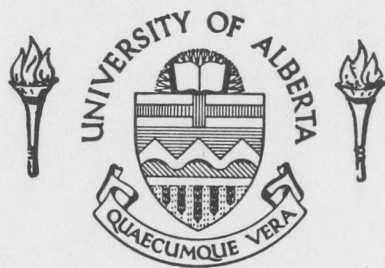


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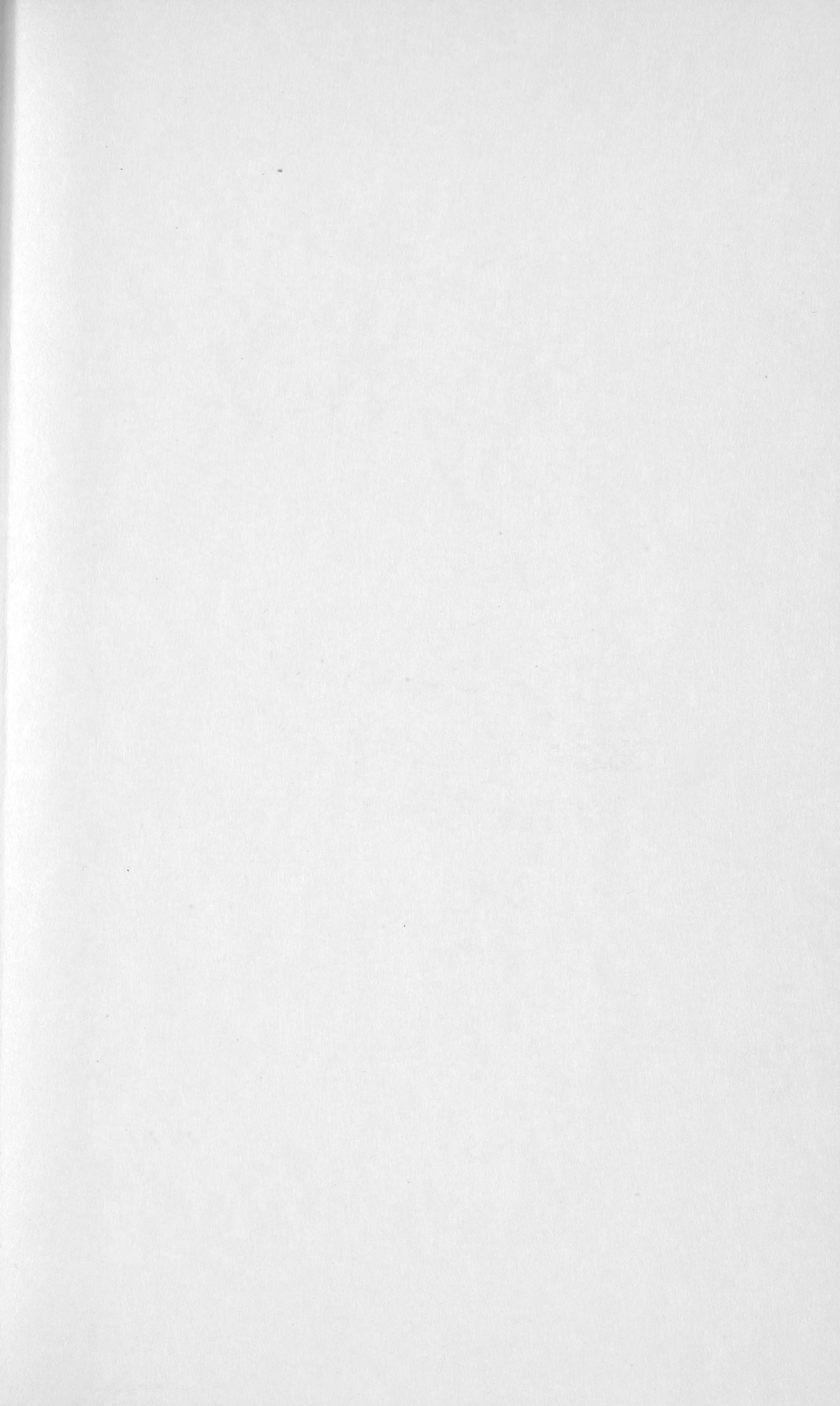
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The Icelandic Canadian

Winnipeg, Canada

Autumn 1956

The Icelandic Canadian

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EDITORIAL

THE SOVEREIGN POWER OF NATIONS AND ITS LIMITATIONS

I.

It may be said that the first sovereign power was exercised by the father over his family. But the head of the household found that for the defence of the family and in order to cope with the forces of nature and obtain food for sustenance, he had to select others to serve under or with him. That was the origin of the much later "paterfamilias" of early Rome. But at the same time it was discovered that families had to band together and form packs and later the packs formed into tribes. As between one group and another there was unlimited freedom, the law of the jungle. But within the group, which in course of time became a nation, usually ruled over by a king, there had to be some restrictions on the freedom of the individual; a balance had to be found between the authority of the state and the freedom of the citizen and the group within the state.

From then on two forms of struggle developed: the struggle within the kingdom or other form of state to preserve or obtain a measure of freedom for the individual or group; the struggle in defending the kingdom from attack by invading forces. At times the force needed for the defence of the kingdom was used for overpowering other groups of peoples or even kingdoms and that way dynasties and empires developed. But leaving aside this improper use of force it may be said that the struggles of the past, aside from those of an economic nature, have been for the protection of the rights of the citizen within the state and for the guarding of the sovereign power of the state itself the defence of the state against outside attack.

The absolute authority of the state developed much earlier than the freedom of the individual within the state. Sovereign power was exercised by an absolute monarch or a viceroy or a group exercising the powers of a dictator. One of the most inspiring studies in the evolution of modern organized human society is the struggle of the people within nations to obtain that measure of freedom which their collective conscience told them should be theirs. In some cases the struggle took on a different form: a group had been made a part of a nation or given colonial status by force or threat of force and thus made subordinate to the dominant state.

By way of illustration of struggles for the rights of the individual the group three may be mentioned. In England there was the struggle

the rights of the people: Magna Carta; The Habeas Corpus Act; The Bill of Rights. In Canada the struggle was for sovereign power within a Commonwealth: Confederation; Imperial Conferences; The Statute of Westminster; The Canadian Citizenship Act. In Iceland the struggle was for complete independence: the convention in 1851; The Constitution of 1874; the Danish-Icelandic Act of Union 1918; the re-establishment in 1944 of the ancient Republic.

But the freedom won for the citizen in a democratic state has its limitations; it is not uncontrolled license. Furthermore its very preservation demands the fulfillment of obligations which every loyal citizen gladly accepts. A good example of a succinct statement of the duties and responsibilities of a citizen in a democratic state is to be found in the Oath of Allegiance taken by an alien upon application for Canadian Citizenship. The applicant must take a threefold oath. Using language applicable to a republic as well as a constitutional monarchy it may be said that the applicant has to swear loyalty to those in authority, swear that he will obey the laws of the state, and thirdly—and this is the most important obligation of the three—swear that he will fulfill his responsibilities as a citizen of that state. People who are citizens by birth do not have to go through the formalities of such an oath but the obligations are all implied and in citizenship ceremonies are very often impressed upon young people who have just become of age. All this circumscribes and lessens the freedom of action of the citizen but he willingly accepts such restrictions because he knows that it is in the best interests of himself and the state to which he owes loyalty.

This limitation of the freedom of

the citizen and the corresponding duties placed upon him are so well understood and generally accepted in a Western democracy that if the purpose were not something else a restatement here would be a waste of time of both writer and reader. But those limitations and duties provide instructive parallels when the sovereignty and limitations upon the sovereignty of a nation vis-a-vis other nations have to be considered.

II.

Nations acquired independence or the right to exercise sovereign power in different ways and those ways, whether by settlement of new areas of land or by wars of conquest or secession, need not be discussed here. But during the centuries it was discovered that the acquiring of the right of exercising sovereign power was not sufficient; that the independence won might be lost and had to be defended. Nations have found, at least in this twentieth century, that it is just as necessary for them to band together as it was for the members of the pre-historic pack, the tribe and the early small kingdom. Nations which are thus compelled to join forces for their mutual protection and for the maintenance of their standards and ways of life must be prepared to accept limitations upon their rights—limitations upon their sovereign power. This curtailment of their rights of action as nations is relatively modern and hence not so generally and readily accepted as limitations upon the freedom of the individual. But there is another reason for this slower acceptance. After a nation has, through a series of struggles, by the sword, by the pen or on the platform, won its independence, it quite naturally and properly becomes very jealous of its

sovereignty. Any infringement upon that sovereignty is bound to be deeply resented.

But a world situation may arise, over which the nation has no control, which may compel it, and its citizens, to review the independent status it has acquired. The second type of struggle has to be studied: the defence of the state from attack and the need of assistance from other nations. The newly acquired independence must be viewed in the light of facts which are real and potentialities which are far from being pure imagination.

III.

The first steps taken by nations for mutual defence were in the nature of alliances the formalities of which varied from solemn national engagements in the form of treaties to mere understandings and slowly developed traditions. But no matter how binding by formal document, or how loosely formed, these alliances had one common factor: to some extent an obligation was created as between the two contracting nations and hence to some extent the sovereignty of each became circumscribed and limited.

The most notable of the formal type of alliances for mutual defence was The Triple Entente between Great Britain, France and Russia, formed to meet the challenge of the Central Powers of that time, Germany and Austria-Hungary. It came to an end in 1917 with the rise of the Bolshevik regime in Russia. After the First World War an effort was made to create an organization for the perpetuation of peace which all nations would be expected to join and The League of Nations came into existence, the members of which were bound by a solemn covenant to help maintain world peace. The weakness of The

League of Nations lay in the unwillingness of the member nations to carry out the obligations they had assumed. The attack on Manchuria by Japan on September 18, 1931, veiled in a seemingly innocent explosion of a bomb on a railroad, later referred to by the Japanese as "The Chinese Incident", was a direct challenge to the Covenant of the League of Nations. It was equally a violation of the Nine Power Treaty in force at that time in the Far East. No nation was prepared to take up arms against Japan. That act of aggression led to others: the conquest of Ethiopia; the invasion of China; the occupation of the demilitarized Rhineland; the invasion of Poland; World War Two.

Towards the end of the second war The United Nations came into existence. But it was soon discovered that the member nations were not united, that with the exception of a few who sought to maintain a sort of a benevolent neutrality, they were divided into two groups separated by irreconcilable ideologies. The veto power given to the permanent members of the Security Council has more often been used to obstruct measures sincerely designed to further the cause of peace than, as originally intended, to prevent a major power becoming the victim of a scheming majority. The General Assembly, it was found, is a gathering of representatives of most of the nations of the world, whose majority opinions are bound to carry great weight, but yet whose decisions at best, are but moral judgments, upheld or rejected according to the national conscience of each member state.

The group that had persistently held that eventually its way of life must be imposed upon the whole world, appeared to have retreated from

that position when it invented the theory of co-existence. Acts of aggression here and there cast grave doubts upon the sincerity of those who advocated this peaceful co-existence. The free nations of the world felt compelled to form lines of defence, to enter into agreements for the mutual defence of areas which might be invaded or at least might be put under very severe pressure.

IV.

Numerous organizations of a purely defensive character have already come into existence and others may be formed. Five may be enumerated: the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Nato; the South East Asia Treaty Organization, Seato; the Middle East Treaty Organization, Meto; the Australian, New Zealand and United States Organization, Anzus; and the tripartite alliance between Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey of 1954. The Colombo Plan has the same objective in view but by a more indirect method in that its purpose is primarily to raise standards of living in backward countries in the hope that the peoples assisted will be better able to resist propaganda from without or within. The division of the world into two camps has been given at least implied recognition and the apparently irreconcilable features of the division acknowledged in the attempts that are being made to form a neutral block led by India, Yugoslavia and Egypt*. Day to day changes in the world scene weaken or add strength to the various organizations that have come into existence.

The five organizations, which have been mentioned, were formed primarily and in one or two cases almost exclusively, for purposes of defence against military attacks. They are the

result of the Cold War and the "bush fighting" that has been waged ever since the end of World War Two. But another war looms on the horizon, if indeed it is not already here, equally undisclosed officially as the Cold War. The reference here is to the economic war which has been gaining in intensity during the last few years.

This war differs from the Cold War in that the primary objective on both sides is the same and is accepted as being within the mores of nations in so far as it can be said that, at present, international mores do exist. The immediate objective is twofold: to increase trade, an economic necessity for all nations, and to win over the neutral nations, particularly those which recently have obtained or are in the process of obtaining their independence. So far, so good, and in the language of sports, may the best man win. But there is a difference and the difference does not arise because of the diametrically opposite final objectives the two sides hope will be attained in the countries whose friendship is sought, namely freedom or totalitarianism. The difference lies in methods; the weapons of war are not the same.

The rulers in a totalitarian state need not account to the people for their stewardship. They can make agreements with nations whom they seek to win to their ideology, which economically are obviously unsound. But such a course is not open to a government responsible to the people whom it serves. True, it could, on humanitarian grounds, offer temporary assistance to countries in which the standard of living is very low, and in so doing would lay itself open to a charge of seeking to impose its way of life upon the recipient of its beneficence. Except in such exceptional circumstances a government re-

* Written before the crisis in Egypt.

sponsible to the people must conform to sound economic principles if it is to remain in office. An obvious corollary follows. Because of this very advantage which the dictator states have, the nations of the free world must be most careful in their trade relations with each other lest advantage be taken, by a totalitarian state, of a grievance as a means of winning the nation aggrieved to its side.

The five regional Treaty Organizations differ at least in emphasis, but in their fundamentals of defence of a way of life they have much in common and an analysis of the provisions of one will provide a fair indication of what is embodied in the others. As Canada and Iceland are both members of Nato, and this is an Icelandic Canadian quarterly it is appropriate that Nato be selected.

V.

The North Atlantic Treaty was signed at Washington on April 4, 1949. Originally there were twelve member countries and Iceland was one of them. The Plenipotentiaries who signed for Canada were Lester B. Pearson and H. H. Wrong and those who signed for Iceland were Bjarni Benediktsson and Thor Thors. Protocols to the Treaty have subsequently issued upon the accession of Greece, Turkey and the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany).

Statements in the Preamble to the North Atlantic Treaty and Article 2 of the Treaty itself lay down very clearly and succinctly the principles by which Nato will be guided and the obligations which each member nation has assumed. These sections may appropriately be reproduced here.

Statement in the Preamble

"They (the Parties to the Treaty) are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.

"They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area.

"They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defense and for the preservation of peace and security."

Article 2

"The Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being. They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them."

The need of such an understanding and economic collaboration and the mutual benefits to be derived therefrom will not be discussed here. This editorial article is concerned only with the limitations upon the sovereign power of each of the member nations upon becoming a signatory to treaties such as Nato.

None of the member nations of Nato, not even the most powerful one, the United States of America, has, since the signing of the treaty, been free to take steps which would be a contravention of the terms of the Treaty. Any change in collective defense, any unilateral steps which may cause conflict in the international ec-

onomic policies of the member nations and thus make economic collaboration difficult*, is a violation of the spirit, if indeed not the letter of Nato. It is thus obvious that the freedom of action of the member nations in all but their purely domestic affairs has been definitely curtailed and conscribed.

Nations may hesitate to make commitments involving such definite limitations of action and neutrality may appear to some of them to be the more attractive position to take. But in the world of today such a course has its dangers. Furthermore neutrality may be interpreted as at least an implied refusal to uphold the very principles in which the nation believes and upon which its independence is based. On the other hand, if a nation finds itself within one of the danger areas and is fully in accord with the principles upon which a defence organization for that area is based, it will want to be a member, in fact will take pride in its membership. But that involves obligations. The old maxim of no taxation without representation may have to be put in reverse—no representation without responsibility. Then again, if the position is taken that membership is little more than a public concurrence in a principle, such an attitude might be given an interpretation not much more favourable than open neutrality.

The immediate concern of Nato and other similar organizations is that the member nations and the nationals of each member nation should willingly accept the obligations imposed and the limitations accepted upon admission into the organization. Here the relationships, within a nation, as between state and citizen, provides an interesting and constructive parallel. When nations find it necessary to combine forces for defence and collaborate for mutual well-being the new relationship, with its rights and its responsibilities, should be accepted just as readily and with an equal degree of unanimity as the nationals of each member accept arrangements for the mutual benefits of the state and the citizen.

Nations which have just recently won or acquired their independence may find it difficult to adjust themselves to the involvement associated with membership in defence pacts. But they must view the world situation realistically and constantly remind themselves that the national independence of yesterday has disappeared and that the exercise, by nations individually, of sovereign power in the full amplitude of that term, no matter how attractive and well merited, is gone, never to re-appear. —W. J. LINDAL

* It may be that some members of Nato will take the stand, or may already have taken the stand that the "economic collaboration between any or all of them" should be held in abeyance on the ground that other organizations serve that purpose such as the Organization of European Economic Co-operation, OEEC, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, GATT, and the economic division of the United Nations. That is something for Nato to decide and the "Three Wise Men" of Nato are at present seeking the views of the member nations on the whole Nato setup on both the economic and the military side. But experience has shown that unwise steps in the economic field may have their repercussions on the military side.

A LITERARY GEM

The prologue to Björgvin Guðmundsson's *Memoirs* is in my opinion such a masterpiece of language and philosophy that I have taken the liberty to translate it, rather freely, into English for the benefit of those who are getting out of intimate touch with the Icelandic. Irrespective of subject matter a book written by such an author must provide a very uplifting and pleasant reading.

Paul Bjarnason

PROLOGUE

Night,—night. Illimitable night. No trace of light. No color,—only darkness, darkness everywhere. But hidden in the darkness was the soul of life—and the soul of life was God. An everlasting God. A solitary God. An unorganized warmth, energy and life. But God was lonely, and wept. And His tears fell out into the universal night. The seeds of life were secreted also in the tears; and as they fell the friction made them hot and they became nebulae of glowing stardust. And as the cloud cooled and thickened they became suns and moons and planets.

And God wept,—wept His uncountable tears of life and sympathy out into the endless universe. Millions of suns and billions of planets came into being. They cast their beams of light hither and yon, from one to another, and the permanence of the cosmic night was defeated.

And God took up His abode in the light, and His radiation was borne on its wings from star to star and filled the immensities of space. Life had entered the macrocosm of matter and begun to direct its activity, firstly as to motion and eventually to intelligence. And with the advent of intelligence the conscious battle of life began. The nature of life had become dual: matter demanded elbow-room and physical sustenance, and radiance,

the soul, required sympathy and understanding. Matter provided the individuality, and the soul its instinct for co-operation.

Thus could be worded the divine gospel of our earthly existence, the life that from its conscious beginning has been at constant war with itself—a life that for eons of time, no one knows how long, has devoured itself periodically and as often arisen again, Phoenix-like, because it could not die. Its inclination for self-destruction was ever the most acute at the stages of development most likely to ensure a practical and enduring philosophy. Paradoxically it has seemed to flee those who desire its delights, and fall to those who sacrifice themselves in its behalf.

Generations come and generations go. Each moment of time a new chapter begins in the great book of life. All of them are apparently identical and yet so indescribably unlike, like the lilies in the field or the finger-prints of men. That is one of the richest and pleasing marvels of life. The old story is ever-new to each individual for in his struggle with his own being he must obey the commands of his inherent will, and so emerge a distinct personality, a law that no one can escape any more than the phenomenon of death.

It matters little who tries to reach

the captions of his own story; the answer is still a mystery. The simplicity of life is so ineffably complex, and its complexity so marvelously simple, that no language, except the language of silence, is adequate to describe its wonders. The more one tries to share one's inmost thoughts or feelings with others, the farther one strays from the goals of desire that are common to all humanity. That is why everyone is so pitifully alone, and most of all he who is highly cultured. The beasts, especially the so-called wild ones, are more fortunate in that regard; for they know the language of silence, the method of communication that needs not do violence to itself in the ceaseless struggle to assemble lame and imperfect symbols of thought or feeling, the only language that in one fleeting look can reflect the soul itself in a way that leaves no room for misunderstanding. The heart is the sense-organ of life, the soul, and the halfspoken sentiments, dependent on silence to complete, are the ones that cut deepest. The law of life and its profoundest truths are revealed in each individual's mute and innate desire to sympathize with everything endowed with the breath of life.

The chapter to be inscribed here came into being shortly before the tide of events drifted out of the placid seas of the nineteenth century unto the swollen ocean of the twentieth. On its restless and tumultuous waters it is considered a patent sign of senility to confess to a past. But whether condemned or condoned, the ages now

gone, with their ups and downs in the progression of life, are still with us and still active in the long-fingered hands of Destiny.

But why, you may ask, am I writing what might as well be called an autobiography? That is difficult for me to say, and, as I see it, rather immaterial. There might be several reasons, or none. I don't know with any certainty, and doubt that I ever shall until the last word is written—if then. Yes, one probability stems from the fact that I am old and possess a past. Another reason might be traced to simple ingenuousness. As a boy I was a tattletale; and that being so, would it not be fitting for me to crown that vice at last by freely telling tales on myself and others, if only to teach the young what to avoid?

Also do I feel the desire to mention in print some of the many good people that so often and in so many ways have influenced my thinking and my activities, who have cheered me along the way and given me the means and courage to pursue the aims and hopes that burned in my breast. And finally, it gives me pleasure to impress the names of my parents and kin, from whom I have long since drifted afar, in a book that possibly may outlive us all.

Beyond that there is no conscious urge or purpose, except the will to record each incident, good or bad, as it happened.*

* The book "**Míningar**" by Björgvin Guðmundsson, in Icelandic is for sale by David Björnsson, at 763 Banning St., Winnipeg, in cloth binding and costs \$5.00. —Editor.

RICH TREASURES OF EXPERIENCE

"An unplanned for, but highly delightful feature of the Inter-Lake area Regional Chamber of Commerce Conference, held at Eriksdale on May 3, 1956 was an inspiring message given by one of the pioneer residents of the district, Mr. O. Hallson.

"Throughout his lifetime, Mr. Hallson has displayed those qualities of good citizenship for which our Western pioneers have become famous. He believed in Canada and he had faith in the Inter-Lake district and devoted himself unselfishly to everything that was good for the district. He was an active member of the first Eriksdale Board of Trade and served as a director for many years.

"True to the characteristics of the Icelandic people—their love of native land—its laws, literature and traditions—Mr. Hallson has exemplified these qualities in his contributions to community service and the life of the Eriksdale district has been made the richer through his having lived there.

"The Chambers of Commerce of Manitoba salute Mr. Hallson as typical of those great Canadians who have contributed of their best—in a meaningful and effective way—to the progress of the life of one of our well established communities."

The above are extracts from a brochure published by the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce

"Before I begin the few remarks that I intend to offer today, I would like to mention something else. I would have travelled right from the eastern border of this province to the western for one purpose alone, that is, to hear the word that Mr. Hallson has said here today. In the course of those remarks he referred to himself as being old. In my opinion, years don't mean a thing. It's the man's ideas that count. He mentioned in his few words, and I quote: 'We've seen a nation grow'. I wonder who developed the embryo of that nation. I wonder who nurtured it—brought it along. And I cannot but feel a little humble, as one of a group of public men who have to carry on a much simpler task than the one that faced them in the beginning."

"I feel that no matter how wise my words might be tonight, they cannot leave as important a thought as was left with you by the very few words spoken by Mr. Hallson."

The above are excerpts from the address of Hon. R. W. Bend, Minister of Health and Public Welfare of the Province of Manitoba, delivered at the banquet meeting to which Mr. Hallson gave the following address of welcome which may appropriately be entitled:

TREASURES IN MEMORIES

by OLAFUR HALLSON

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Minister, Members of the Chamber of Commerce and Friends:

It is indeed a pleasure to address you as our guests and to assure you that the Eriksdale Chamber of Commerce is proud and happy in being able to receive you.

You have been wonderful guests! The work carried on in the Hall today was excellent and inspiring; a true spirit of patriotism shone through it all. Here is an organization that is not based on politics or on special benefits for any special group, but exists for the benefit of all the Canadian people.

Sometimes you wonder when you see old hulks at gatherings—elderly people whose days of adventure are over—you wonder, you think to yourself: "What have they got to be so happy about—what is done is done and they'll be dead soon". You may feel in your heart that you are a little bit sorry for them. Well, don't waste any of your sympathy on them. They are the happiest people alive because they are all rich—rich in experience—and they all have a treasure in their memories. I tell you that it is a wonderful compensation—being old—for you have so many beautiful things to remember. And isn't it wonderful to know that we never lose anything we have loved. All locked up in your heart! It's yours forever. Forgotten are the defeats but you remember the victories. You have forgotten the people that you happened to know who were kind of mean and miserable and hard to get along with—you have forgotten them—but you remember all the lovely inspiring people who encouraged you on the

road through life and to greater achievement.

Some of you young people missed a lot when you didn't get into this country fifty years ago! Of course, a lot of things that we treasured then are just junk now, out of date, no use any more, just like the old folks. Yet do we throw away the old things? No, we don't! We put them in museums, we build costly buildings for them. We spend a lot of money in taking care of them and we show them with pride to generation after generation of people. True, these things are out of date and a long time past their usefulness; but we get a cursory amount of lift out of thinking how the people who lived in those by-gone days were able to put up with those things. We have things that are so much better and so much more nearly perfect. Just take a look at an old "Model T". It was noisy—just as noisy as any of us when we were young and had a lot to say. But do we think any less of it for that? No—we find an honored place for that old "Model T" in our museums. Those are the links with the past. And the old people of every generation are the links between that which is past and that which is to come. Yes, after all that link is valuable; you'll never see the likes of the people who came here forty to fifty years ago; they were pioneers—brought up under totally different conditions.

This is a Board of Trade meeting today and my mind goes back to the first little Board of Trade we had in Eriksdale in 1912. Necessity forced us to form it. We had no road—there wasn't a piece of road anywhere in

the country—and this, which is our first street, was a bog and we clubbed together and raised \$250.00 and made the first grade that was built in this municipality.

We didn't have any adequate water supply so we got together again and we had a well drilled up in the corner here by the hotel. So we assured ourselves of clean water.

And so it was. A Board of Trade! We had heard that name somewhere and it sounded good to us and we called ourselves a Board of Trade, but we weren't affiliated until years later. And it was a happy day for us when this Board in Eriksdale was affiliated with the Associated Boards of Trade of Manitoba and of Canada generally.

My mind goes back to our first picnic, which we had in 1912. And what a polyglot group we were! Greetings were exchanged in twenty-five different languages that day, for people were here from every country in Europe, and from the United States. And there were no Canadians there! Oh no—they were all something else. True, we had some people among us who were British born or born in Canada of British stock; they were British but they weren't Canadian. And what a joy it was when we lived to see the day when we could proudly call ourselves Canadians.

Canadians! How many years ago since we legally became a nation? Is it 8 or 9 years ago? Something like that! And it was a happy day! The people that came in here had some of those qualities which Mr. McMullen so beautifully described today. The pioneers! He said that a characteristic of the pioneers was "Self Reliance", oh yes and another one, "Courage". Yes, and "Self Confidence". I add "Faith". They had faith **in themselves** and faith

in the future of this country and they had faith **in God**.

Mr. McMullen mentioned that it was necessary to "believe in yourself". And I know that is a healthy belief and very necessary. And he added the wish that "others may then believe in you too". Now they don't always do that. But it's a cinch that if you don't believe in yourself—you know yourself best—nobody else will. So make a start; believe in yourself and perhaps you may be proven to be right.

This country started out with high courage, with confidence and with faith. People from many lands came here and have now become one—the Canadian nation. We have reason to be proud of this nation, for the whole world has a share in the creation of it. Our nation has drawn from the best that is to be found among the civilized nations of the world. It's all ours for nothing. We have those people living next door to us every day of our lives from the time we are children going to school to the time we die.

Isn't it wonderful to think of it, that Canada—the Canadian people—are already becoming an example to the world? Yet that is not surprising for they have an understanding of people and their problems far surpassing any other group. There is our big brother to the south and our mother country to the east; we have become the interpreters, the conciliators, the bringers of good-will between those two large groups. And we look in friendship and appreciation to the whole world.

It has been proven by experience that the many different people of the world can live and work together in harmony as Canadians; we did ourselves; others too—they are all here today. And isn't it a glorious thing for us to look forward to "a bigger and better Canada—fired with the idea of

Brotherhood—working together for the common good of men”?

Seeing and knowing this, can you understand now how we “oldsters” are happy? We have seen this thing come to life. We have seen a new nation being created, land received as it was from the hands of The Maker and brought under subjection. We’ve seen all these things come to pass and we can say with the old man, “Now let this thy servant depart in peace”.

Never feel sorry for the old people for they are rich. Let me just finish and say: “This has been a happy day

for all of us. May we have many more like it.”

In this Inter-Lake country we must cement our plans, work for a common solution to our common problems; but our problems must not blind us to that which is for the good of all the people of Manitoba and indeed of Canada.

Many more meetings may be held and may the blessing of God be on them, as I felt sure it was on this meeting of ours in the hall today, and on those sitting around this table here tonight. Thank you.

A PARADOX

By SOLVEIG SVEINSSON.

I heard the silence whisper
To me so soft and low;
And felt the darkness light the way
For roving feet to go.
I saw the fragrance of a rose
Arise above the land,
And watched my dream come close to me
And take me by the hand.

★

Ö f u g m æ l i

Þýtt af Dagbjörtu Vopnfjörd

Sig þögnin læsti í eyra inn
svo undur mjúkt og þýtt;
í myrkri fótur ferðbúinn
gat fundið ljósið blítt.
Eg sá hvar ilmur blóma beið
að breiðast yfir lönd;
og til mín draumur ljúfur leið,
og leiddi sér við hönd.

It may be somewhat of a paradox to have a poem composed in English by an Icelander and translated into Icelandic by another Icelander. This magazine is glad to publish the two and hopes to receive more of the same type and quality. —Ed.

HOW OTHERS SEE US

by REV. ERLE HOWELL

The record, comprised in this magazine, could appropriately go further than put in permanent form the achievements of people of Icelandic descent and their thoughts and aspirations expressed in poetry and prose. It could as well include what others think of us. That is, at least to some extent, a measure of the impression we are making as we become part of the two great nations on this continent.

The following are the essentials of an article which appeared in the Seattle Times of June 10, 1956, by the Rev. Erle Howell of the First Methodist Church, Seattle. The article does not purport to be a historical sketch, merely a glimpse at events of the years and a glance at the scene of today as it presents itself to an outsider. —Ed.

Seattle's Icelandic colony, concentrated chiefly in Ballard, has retained much of the Old Country traditions in culture and religion—while accepting the freedom and responsibility of American citizenship.

When the first representatives of the North Atlantic island republic first arrived in the Pacific Northwest in the mid-1880's they brought with them their dearest treasures, the Bible, books of devotions, Passion hymns and volumes of Icelandic classics.

One of Seattle's most articulate exponents of Icelandic culture is Mrs. Jakobina Johnson, 3208 W. 59th St. She was born in Iceland and was taken to Canada at the age of 5. She came to Seattle in 1908.

Mrs. Johnson has delivered hundreds of lectures, interpreting the history and culture of her native land. She has translated into English many Icelandic poems, some of which have been published in book form, including two anthologies. Her private library includes sagas and Eddas, for which Icelandic literature is famous.

Besides developing her private library, Mrs. Johnson, as a member of "Vestri", an organization of Icelandic-Americans, has assisted in the building of a club library of more than 1000 volumes of the best literature of Iceland. "Vestri" means "in the West".

"The library has been my university", Mrs. Johnson said. "Through it I have access to the literature and culture of Iceland."

Mrs. Johnson is a member of several groups which promote the unity of the Icelandic residents here and attends Calvary Lutheran Church. She has reared seven children to be good American citizens and is a Gold Star mother.

Speaking of her fellow-Icelandic neighbors, Mrs. Johnson said, "We are all whole-hearted Americans, but one cannot forget his father and mother. Friendship and understanding spring from knowledge. It is through spreading knowledge of Iceland that we hope to build friendship between that country and America."

Twice in the past 20 years Mrs. Johnson has been invited to visit her native land in recognition of her work in promoting Icelandic culture.

The library established by Vestri has been kept for 30 years in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jon Magnusson, 2833 W. 70th St. Magnusson was born in Iceland and came to America in 1918. His wife, Gudrun, was born in Canada of Icelandic parents and speaks the language of her ancestors.

Keeping the Icelandic library has contributed happiness to Mr. and Mrs. Magnusson. "Members of Vestri"

Magnusson said, "contribute their best-loved volumes to the collection and the group purchases certain books each year."

Recently there came to the members of Vestri an opportunity to repay, in part, the Mother Country for contributions to their culture.

Helgi Tryggvason of Reykjavik, capital of Iceland, came to Seattle, seeking back numbers of periodicals to complete broken sets. In the Vestri library were many magazines which never would be used again. These were donated to the collector.

Karl F. Frederick, has been Iceland's consul in Seattle, since 1950. He was born in North Dakota of Icelandic parents and loves the culture of his people. He came to Seattle in 1902 and identified himself with the interests of fellow Icelanders. He became active in Vestri, united with the Icelandic congregation and early was recognized as a leader among his people.

Frederick followed the accounting profession and for more than 30 years was associated with Alaska fisheries. He retired from active business in 1952 and since has devoted his time to the consulate and his garden.

"The Icelandic people have adjusted admirably to the freedom of the United States," Frederick said. "For centuries they fought for ideals similar to those most precious to Americans. Iceland first became a republic in 930 A.D. Its people not only accept the culture of the United States but share their own."

Frederick has two sons, Dr. Philip M. Frederick, and Richard K. Frederick, general manager of American Can Co. in Portland. His daughter, Mrs. Louis Varkaus, is a student in the Medical Department of Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Many members of the younger generation of Icelandic parentage have attended the University of Washington and other institutions of higher learning. Among graduates are physicians, surgeons, dentists, nurses, attorneys, teachers, musicians, and businessmen.

Among Seattle professional men of Icelandic extraction are Dr. Victorian Sivertz, of the Department of Chemistry at the University of Washington, and three physicians and surgeons, Dr. J. A. Arnason, Dr. Edward P. Palmason and Dr. H. F. Thorlakson. Mr. Tani Bjarnason and Dr. Palmason are well known singers.

So far as is known the oldest Icelandic citizen of Seattle is Mrs. Helga Johnson. She was 89 April 19, 1956. She came to America in 1893 and has resided in Seattle 47 years.

Running Mrs. Johnson a close second in age is Mrs. Gudrun Laxdal. She will be 89 August 10th. She came to America in 1888 and to Seattle 15 years ago.

The Icelandic people are known for their religious devotion. Those in the Pacific Northwest have continued their connection with the church to an unusual degree. Since about 1900 they have maintained a preaching point in Seattle, served by visiting pastors.

The present pastor of the congregation is the Rev. Russel Weberg. Of Norwegian origin Pastor Weberg is devoted to his congregation which has 250 active members.

"In Iceland," Mr. Weberg said, "religion always has played a prominent role in family life. In Seattle the church is the strongest force that holds the people together."

The minister said that almost every Icelander in Seattle has some contact with the church during the year. He cited the celebration last April 29 of

the 30th anniversary of the organization of Calvary. Many persons took part who are not regularly in attendance.

The great day in the life of Seattle Icelandic people is June 17, the anniversary of the establishment of the present republic in 1944. The day also

is the birthday anniversary of Iceland's great leader and patriot Jon Sigurdson.

The character and good citizenship of Seattle's Icelandic colony are verified in the total absence of major crime among them. This undoubtedly is due to the spiritual turn of mind of these staunch and devoted Americans

John W. Perkins, World Linguist

John Wesley Perkins, master of 26 European languages and regarded as one of the most versatile translators ever to serve the State Department of the United States, died recently in Washington, D. C., at the age of 69.

Due to ill health, Mr. Perkins retired last February, as chief of the General Section of the Department's Division of Language Services.

Mr. Perkins possessed the rare gift of being able to learn languages without instruction from anyone, with perhaps one exception, Icelandic. His wife may have helped him. He knew all the Scandinavian, Baltic and Slavic languages. He was able to translate into English on sight many difficult passages which puzzled even natives.

Mr. Perkins received his M.A. degree at the North-Western University and taught languages at several small colleges before coming to Washington in 1916 as a translator with the Department of Commerce.

In his work, Mr. Perkins attended most of the Big Four Conferences. He also was in charge of translations at the organization of the United Nations in San Francisco. He suffered a stroke last year, the day before he planned

to leave with Dwight Eisenhower for the Summit Conference at Geneva.

Mr Perkins was buried in Rising Sun, Indiana, his birthplace. His only survivor is his wife Mekkin. She is of Icelandic extraction and is a translator in the State Department.

Mekkin Sveinsson Perkins is well known for her excellent translation of Icelandic stories, some of which are compiled in the book: "Icelandic Poems and Stories", edited by Dr. Richard Beck and published for the American Scandinvian Foundation of New York, in 1943. To mention a few, there is "Homesickness" by Jón Stefánsson (Thorgils Gjallandi), "The Tale of Sigurður The Fisherman" by Gestur Pálson, "The Orphan" by Einar Hjörleifson Kvaran, "The Old Hay" by Guðmundur Friðjónsson, "When I was on the Frigate" by Jón Trausti, "Destitution" by Kristín Sigfúsdóttir, "The Wedding Night" by Unnur Benediktsdóttir (Hulda), "The Last Words" by Jakob Thorarensen, "The Fox Skin" by Guðmundur Gíslason Hagalín, and "Such is Life" by Kristman Guðmundsson. —A.E

Dr. S. J. Johannesson

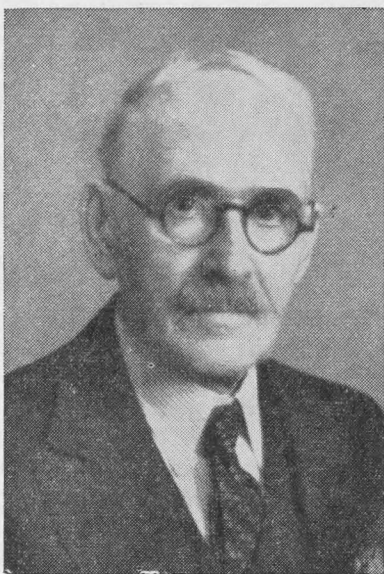
A Humanitarian

by DR. S. E. BJORNSEN

The life span of one of the best known humanitarians among the Icelandic pioneers here, has run its full course. Dr. Sigurður Júlíus Johannesson was not only a medical practitioner; his versatility as a poet of renown, a journalist, an independent thinker and orator, and writer of children's literature was well known and greatly appreciated by the Icelandic people. Above all he was a gentleman in every sense of the word, loved and respected by all who knew him.

Dr. Sig. Júl. Johannesson was born at Læk in Ölfus, Jan. 9, 1868. His early years were in many ways similar to those of other young people brought up on an Icelandic farmstead. However, in his case the circumstances were somewhat different. As a young boy he had to leave his home—and not only earn his own living but also assist in the support of his family. He was the oldest of eight children and whatever remuneration he received he gave to support his younger brothers and sisters. For many years there did not appear to be much opportunity for him to get a higher education. But in spite of many difficulties he finally managed to enroll in the Latin School, now “Menntaskólinn”, in Reykjavík, graduating in 1897 at the age of 29. His graduation was in some respects sensational and record breaking; he finished the last two years study in one year and at the same time had to earn his living. It soon became evident that he was not only an exceptional scholar but also a prolific writer of both poetry and prose. He had an objective in mind in all he wrote. He was a reformer, and

demanding better conditions for every one and equality in living standards for all. He became an assistant editor of “Dagskrá”, a paper published by the late Einar Benediktsson, who later



Dr. S. J. Johannesson

became the greatest poet of his time in Iceland. At this time he established the periodical “Æskan”, and was assisted by the I.O.G.T. of Iceland. In 1898 he enrolled in the Medical School in Reykjavík. But financial difficulties beset this versatile young man, partly caused by some of his scathing writings. He had bought the Dagskrá and thus became responsible for its publications. Articles appeared in it which were so critical of existing conditions that a judgment was obtained against him in a large sum of money. Payment of the judgment was out of the question so in 1899 the young medical

student decided to emigrate to Canada. This was a difficult decision to make as he loved his native land with all his heart. One little verse from his book of poems "Kvistir" serves to show his feelings at the time. He writes to Iceland:

"Ef drottinn gerði að gulli tár,
sem geymir hugur minn,
þá vildi eg gráta öll mín ár
til auðs í vasa þinn."

If God would turn to gold my tears
His gift of love so true
Then I would gather over the years
My wealth of tears for you.

During the years Dr. S. J. J., as he was commonly called, very frequently gave expression to his inmost thoughts and feelings in poetry and in 1910 he published a book of almost two hundred poems which he very appropriately called "Kvistir", "Branches". His poetry is inspired with an optimistic outlook, a reverence for life and deep religious feeling:

"Í von er ljúft að lifa
því lífið er svo ríkt
af ást og sól og sælu
og sjálfum guði vígt".

In hope is life worth living
life so rich and grand
with blessings great and glorious
from God's all loving hand.

His attitude towards the problems of the day is apparent in the following lines:

"Lof sé guði 'ann gaf mér aldrei tungu
að geta sleikt upp sérhvern finan skó."

Praise be to God, He never gave me
tongue
to lick the boots that trample people's
rights.

His trip from Reykjavík to Canada was very trying, to say the least. He had to work his way across, but after several weeks of travel he landed in Winnipeg. Later he wrote an article about his experiences on this trip under the heading "Skrykkjótt ferðalag" "Harassing Journey". This appeared in the Book of Journalists 1948, in Iceland and is a remarkable story, but here only a mere reference to it can be made. But the struggle did not end on arrival in Canada for now he had to take on any work he could find as was the usual custom for emigrants with no other means of support. That story will have to be passed over, but eventually he managed to get into a Medical College in order to continue the study he had already started in Iceland. In Winnipeg this study had to be abandoned for lack of funds. But in spite of this he was determined to do something more about it later. Next we find him in Boston, Mass., living with Dr. Viðbjörn Stefánsson. He worked there for a while, and in the fall he went to Chicago where he found a permanent job and had a chance to study medicine as well.

At Christmas-time that same year, he was able to visit Winnipeg again. The time life for him had a much brighter outlook. On his way back home he married Halldóra Fjeldsted, his surviving widow, who later proved to be his most trustful and loving companion to the end. She encouraged him in his work and looked after all his needs in such a way that the rough journey became smooth and pleasant. He graduated in Medicine in 1907 and set up a practice in Chicago which did not prove to be remunerative. Consequently he decided to move to Canada and start a general practice among the Icelandic people there.

He practised for seven years in the Icelandic settlement at Leslie, Sask., but in 1914 he took over the editorship of the Icelandic weekly, *Lögberg*. This was during the First World War. Canada had entered the struggle and agitation for war service was prevalent everywhere. Dr. S. J. J. was opposed to war and in his paper wrote against compulsory war service. Under the circumstances this could not be tolerated by the Editorial Board. Hence after 2½ years of editorship he resigned his position and at the same time started a new weekly called "*Vor-öld*", in which he wrote scathing articles against compulsory war service. He edited this paper more than two years, and following this he reinstated himself in general medical practice, at first in Lundar, Man., and later in Winnipeg, where he remained for the last thirty years of his long and useful life. In spite of a busy life as medical practitioner he used his spare time for writing both prose and poetry. His poetry is largely lyrical and much of it is written for the children and younger folks. It is all written for a purpose: to teach young people facts about good manners and true Christian life. He was an active member and at one time secretary of the Icelandic National League and Editor of their juvenile journal "*Baldursbrá*". At the time he was the Editor of *Lögberg* he published "*Sólskin*" "*Sunshine*". This little paper was mailed out to all subscribers of the Weekly and created great enthusiasm and love for this great children's friend and teacher.

Dr. and Mrs. Johannesson had two daughters, both university graduates.

Svanhvit Gudbjorg, now Mrs. Gordon Josie, is a graduate in Law from the University of Manitoba and in Social Work from the University of Toronto. Before her marriage Mrs. Josie did legislative and research work in the Department of Labour in Ottawa and since her marriage has continued some of her research work and at times gives private tuition in law and social work. Freda (Malfridur Sigridur) Johannesson, the other daughter, is a graduate of the Toronto School of Social Work and at present is the Medical Social Worker at headquarters of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Ottawa.

Dr. Johannesson visited Iceland once and was very well received as one would expect for a man of his sterling qualities, who long before had won the heart of the nation for his brilliant work and his humanitarian endeavours. On this visit he was scheduled to speak on many occasions, and wherever he spoke, the house was filled to capacity. He was an ardent Good Templar all his life, and in 1948 the Grand Lodge of Iceland in co-operation with the Icelandic Government invited him on his 80th birthday to visit Iceland again. But by that time his voice was gone and he said he would not go knowing that he could not answer questions with full voice. But in 1941 he received a small stipend for his poetic works from the Icelandic Government.

It may be added here that Dr. Johannesson had a good life in spite of or rather because of the great struggle he had to endure in his younger days. He was above board always, an optimist, who could look back to his personal endeavours with just pride.

ÞORSTEINN Þ. ÞORSTEINSSON

Poet and Historian

By PROFESSOR RICHARD BECK

The recent death of Þorsteinn Þ. Þorsteinsson removed from the literary scene one of the most gifted and productive writers among the Western Icelanders, whose passing was likewise genuinely lamented in Iceland, where he was well-known and highly regarded.

He was born November 11, 1879, at the farm of Uppsáir in Svarfaðardalur in northern Iceland. On both sides of his family he came from forebears noted for their gifts of versification, literary and historical interest. His father, Þorsteinn Þorsteinsson, who died in Winnipeg in 1912, was a master craftsman, a richly endowed self-educated man, whose interest in Icelandic folk literature and other historical lore is attested by much published material in that field.

It was, therefore, not surprising that his son, Þorsteinn Þ. Þorsteinsson, inherited in a rich measure both the poetic gifts and the literary and historical interest so prominent in his family. Furthermore, at the excellent home of his foster parents, at the farm of Syðra-Hvarf in his native district, he came under the stimulating influence of Þorsteinn Þorkelsson, a man of learning and a hymn-writer, who was his teacher for a number of years.

Þorsteinn Þ. Þorsteinsson attended the Agricultural School at Hólar in Hjaltadalur 1898-1900, but upon his graduation, in the summer of 1901, he migrated to Canada, settling in Winnipeg. He made his home there, except for a year in Vancouver, B. C., 1907-1908, two sojourns in Iceland, 1920-

1921 and 1933-1937, and his very last years at Gimli, Manitoba, where he passed away December 24, 1955. It is strikingly illustrative of his strong attachment to his native land, that he



Þorsteinn Þ. Þorsteinsson

decreed that his ashes and those of his second wife, Goðmunda Haraldsdóttir who died some years ago, should be interred in the soil of his beloved Svarfaðardalur; the interment took place at special funeral services at the church of Vellir in Svarfaðardalur on May 27, 1956. His first wife Rannveig Jónsdóttir, died in Winnipeg in 1912. Of two sons born to that union only one survives, a resident of Winnipeg.

In Winnipeg Þorsteinn Þ. Þorsteinsson earned his livelihood as a house painter, but his deeply ingrained an-

istic bent found an expression in numerous portraits, drawings and decorations, which, though amateurish in some ways, undeniably reveal considerable ability and fertile imagination.

However, his attraction to the written word, the traditional vehicle of Icelandic artistic expression, his poetic inclination and scholarly interest, increasingly directed his intellectual pursuits into literary and historical channels. His versatility was such that he has to his credit, besides his poetry, a number of short stories and essays of great merit, as well as his highly significant writings on the history of the Icelanders in North America. Nowhere is his many-sidedness fuller or better revealed than in his semi-annual *Saga*, which he published in Winnipeg 1925-1931. While it included poetry and prose, original and translated, by many of the most noted Icelandic writers in the Western World, the contribution by the editor himself is particularly noteworthy, for here are found some of his best short stories, several of his outstanding poems, and striking and penetrating observations on life in the form of articles, sketches and aphorisms. His other literary periodical, *Fiflar* (Dandelions, Winnipeg, 1914 and 1919) also contains some stories and sketches of his worthy of attention.

Þorsteinn Þ. Þorsteinsson published two collections of poetry, both of them in Winnipeg, *Þættir* (Strands, 1918), and *Heimhugi* (Home Thoughts, 1921). All his best poems are characterized by intellectual vigor and virile language; he is original in the treatment of his themes, choice of diction, and verse forms, often inventing his meters and skilfully harmonizing them with his themes. He may, therefore, be said to possess great metrical skill, although his rhythm at times is on the heavy

side and the thought content sometimes outweighs the form.

He has written a whole series of sonnets, where mastery of form and concentration in thought often go hand in hand, such as "Áfram" (Onward), a resounding challenge to head straight for "vision's highest mountains" and let nothing deter one. In other excellent sonnets he pays tribute to his favorites, Walt Whitman and Stephan G. Stephansson, and eloquently eulogizes the Icelandic tongue, a pliant instrument in his hands in verse and prose alike.

Many of his poems are characterized by intellectual quality. His independent and radical views, rooted in his love of freedom and truth and his human sympathy, find expression in forceful social satires. In that respect he appears to have been influenced, or at any rate stimulated by Þorsteinn Erlingsson, but he is no slavish imitator. In an elaborate spring poem, "Vorsöngur" (Spring Song), exalted and ecstatic in tone, the social satire is impressively interwoven with the vivid nature description and exhortation to fruitful living. The same note is struck with equal vigor in his sonorous and challenging poem, "Vorinn-göngudagur" (The Entrance Day of Spring), published when he had passed the seventy-year mark, elegantly revealing his faithful adherence to the ideals of his younger years.

His genuine lyric touch, on the other hand, is seen in such poems as "Dögg" (Dew) and "Hljómdísín" (The Goddess of Melody), and not least in his heartfelt verses "Til Íslands á nýári" (To Iceland at New Years), in which his deep love of country is beautifully expressed.

He was steeped in Icelandic literature and ever an ardent and outspoken champion of the Norse spirit

and Icelandic cultural values. This attitude of his is memorably expressed in his notable poem "Auðunnarkviða vestfirzka", based on "Auðunar þáttur vestfirzka", one of the most masterful of the short Icelandic sagas known as "þættir", which, at their best, as in this case, are indeed short stories of a high merit. Þorsteinn Þ. Þorsteinsson has retold Auðun's story in a moving and challenging fashion.

His two published collections contain, however, only a fraction of his original poems; many are still in manuscript, while others have appeared in his periodical *Saga*, as already mentioned, in the annual *Tímarit Þjóðræknisfélags Íslendinga í Vesturheimi*, and in the Winnipeg Icelandic weeklies. The following three of his later poems may be singled out for special consideration:

"Á Þingvelli 1930" (At Thingvellir 1930) commemorates the millennial of the Icelandic Althing; it is a cycle of poems, rich in thought and descriptive quality, with a fitting undertone of genuine patriotic feeling. "Askur Yggdrasils" (Yggdrasil's Ash) is inspired by the famed World Tree of Old Norse mythology, which the poet not only describes with sweeping imagination, but which strikes from his anvil illuminating observations of life and poetic similes. "Signýjarfórnin" (Signý's Sacrifice) is based on the well-known story of Signý and Loki in the *Poetic Edda*; the poet develops his arresting theme into a striking symbol of the spirit of self-sacrifice. As the title indicates he uses the young form of the name, "Signý".

He has written many impressive and effective occasional poems, including his magnificent tribute to Vilhjálmur Stefánsson, the famed explorer, the three first stanzas of which run thus in Dr. Watson Kirkconnell's success-

ful translation (*Canadian Overtones* Winnipeg, 1935, p. 40):

I sing not the song of the Arctic,
For I know not the frontiers of cold
Nor can I divine them by magic
As the sorceress sang them of old
So be thou, Vilhjálmur, my poem;
Let thy life and thy deeds be my care
For thine is the noblest epos
That Iceland and Canada share.

We might search through the scrolls of
tradition

Did it profit, for pattern to scan
For the manhood that crowns all
endeavour

In the son of a maid or a man.
We love the fair lad whom adventure
Leads eager through peril and toil
And we honor the dream of thy sin
As he broke the New Icelandic soil

Thou wert born in Canadian forests
In the simple log-hut of the north
No prophet foretold thy achievement
That day when thy mother brought
forth

A lad who should dream of adventure
With the pride of the past in his
face

A wandering scion of Thorfinn,
A world-famous son of our race.

Þorsteinn Þ. Þorsteinsson's pride in the achievements of his nation and in its future potentialities, as symbolized in the remarkable career of Vilhjálmur Stefánsson, is the surging undercurrent of his tribute to him. He has also written numerous memorial poems of prominent Icelandic pioneers in North America, poems alive with rich sympathy and deep understanding of their struggle in conquering the new land. Deeply rooted as he is in his native soil and the Icelandic literary tradition, he expressed in his poem

with equal sincerity his appreciation of Canada.

Further, he has not only, as already noted, portrayed the life of the Icelandic pioneers in Canada and the United States in deeply felt poems of great merit, but has also interpreted their struggle and experiences vividly and sympathetically in his short stories, which rank among the best productions of that kind written by Icelandic authors in North America.

These stories are akin in theme, and no less so in spirit, to his major prose writings, his historical works dealing with Icelanders in the Western Hemisphere. Among these his detailed and authentic account of the Icelandic settlers in Brazil, "*Æfintýrið frá Íslandi til Brasilíu* (The Adventure from Iceland to Brazil, Reykjavík, 1937-1938), occupies a special place.

Covering a much wider field and commensurately more general in their appeal are his works dealing with the Icelanders in North America, the first of which was *Vestmenn* (Westmen, Reykjavík, 1935). It is a series of radio addresses delivered over the National Broadcasting System in Iceland during the fall and winter of 1934-1935. These lectures, which were much appreciated by Icelandic radio listeners, constitute a well-written, clear and concise survey of the history of the Icelanders in North America, and doubtless contributed greatly to a better understanding of them, their achievements and problems, on the part of their compatriots in the old country.

This objective and very readable book may also be looked upon as, in

a sense, an introduction to his three-volume work on the subject, *Saga Íslendinga í Vesturheimi* (History of the Icelanders in the Western World, Winnipeg, 1940-1945), a pioneer work in the field, based on wide study of source materials, thorough knowledge of the economic factors and other causes leading to the Icelandic immigration, and characterized by that sympathetic understanding of the character of the pioneers and their battle against great odds, which mark the author's stories and poems about them. In these three volumes, not least the second and third one, there is brought together a vast amount of salient information concerning the Icelandic settlements, as well as about the accomplishments of the pioneers and their descendants. This extensive work, which is not only highly informative but also very readable, at times outright sprightly in style, will remain a basic reference work on the subject, and with it the author, and his co-workers in its publication, rendered a fundamentally important and lasting service to Icelandic historical writings on both sides of the Atlantic.

These historical works of Þorsteinn Þ. Þorsteinsson are a worthy monument to his knowledge, ability and industry in that realm of writing, and would have sufficed to keep his name from oblivion; his creative gifts, however, are, as might be expected, seen to a far better advantage in his stories and especially in his poems, many of which are poetry of a high order, and therefore deserve to be read and remembered.

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Bjarni Thomas Bjarnason

Someone said that every person has a story to tell about his life. Experiences, happy or sad, come early to many people. When Tom Bjarnason was a young lad he dreamed of playing baseball or rugby and living in the great outdoors. But before he had reached maturity war broke out and, like so many thousands of young men, he volunteered for service in World War II.

While training in Europe he contracted pleurisy and after one and a half years he was invalided home to spend a long time in a sanitarium.

The days became weeks, the weeks months and the months lengthened to two and a half years. Tom was not content to stay in bed and be idle all the time. He began drawing sketches of his surroundings and of some of the people round about. He found that he was able to draw reasonably well and decided to join a school of art in Chicago and take lessons by correspondence. One of his early assignments was to draw a portrait of himself. He managed to rig up a sort of easel and mirror and drew his portrait which is very well done.

Tom was with the Winnipeg School of Art for a while but moved to Detroit, Michigan, and was with The Meininger School of Art for over two years. Then he moved to Toronto and worked in the post office for two years, sketching in the evenings. He has been with the T.D.F. Advertising Artists for two and a half years and has gained a great deal of experience in commercial art. Among some of his assignments are four billboard posters for The Canadian Bank of Commerce,

newspaper advertisements for Nabisco Shredded Wheat and the background for advertisements for Chevrolet cars.

I should like to try to describe an advertisement Tom drew for The Canadian Bank of Commerce which appeared in The New York Times Jan.



Bjarni Thomas Bjarnason

5, 1956. The Bank was seeking to draw to the attention of the public that in these days of jet planes and trans-oceanic telephone conversations financial dealings with people in different parts of the world can no longer be described by the words "foreign" or "foreign trade". The artist was instructed to convey this thought in sketches. There are six figures surrounding the word "FOREIGN" representing some of the people of the world. Each figure is perfect in detail. There is an Egyptian riding a camel with the Pyramids in the background, a Spaniard complete in sandals, broad hat and shawl, a Scotsman proudly

playing the bagpipes, an Italian in bolero, an East Indian playing to charm a snake out of a basket and a Dutch woman with a windmill in the background.

Three years ago he drew the cover for Ardis, the publication of The Lutheran Women's League. It was their twenty-first anniversary.

Tom has decided to become a freelance commercial artist. He feels that in that way he would have wider opportunity for giving expression to his art and thus enhance his career. Furthermore, illustrating for mag-

azines, for covers and stories, is very rewarding and is a goal for which artist's aim.

Tom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Guðmundur Bjarnason of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Mrs. Bjarnason is an artist and has many beautiful pictures to her credit.

Such is the story so far of Tom Bjarnason. We look for greater achievements from this young man in the future and await with eagerness the unfolding of his skill in pleasing and instructive art.

M.H.

Iceland Honors Dr. S. E. Björnson and Grettir Eggertson



Dr. S. E. Björnson

The Knight's Cross of the Order of the Falcon was conferred last summer upon Dr. Sveinn E. Björnson, many years practising at Arborg and elsewhere in Manitoba, now of Winnipeg, and upon Grettir Eggertson, of E. G. Eggertson Inc., consulting engineers,



Grettir Eggertson

Winnipeg. The decoration was presented to Dr. Björnson on June 17, at his residence 1080 Dorchester Ave., by Consul Grettir L. Johannson, and upon Mr. Eggertson in Reykjavik on his visit during the summer to Iceland. The presentation to Mr. Eggertson was made by the President of Iceland Asgeir Asgeirsson, at his residence at Bessastöðum near Reykjavik.

J. A. VOPNI

Appointed by Publishers

The following appeared in the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, July 11, 1956:

"At a meeting of the directors in Regina July 6, **John A Vopni**, publisher of The Davidson Leader was asked to accept the position of manager of the Prairie Publishers Co-operative Association. He will assume his new duties on August 1.

Mr. Vopni was chosen by this large co-operative because of his outstanding success in the publishing field, and the favourable public relations work he has accomplished on behalf of the co-operative during his term as vice-president.

Mr. and Mrs. Vopni will reside in Davidson for some time, and later will take up residence in Regina.

There will be no change of ownership in so far as the Vopni interests in Davidson are concerned. These will remain under the management of his son John, and J. Losie.

Mr. Vopni was elected vice-president of Prairie Publishers Co-operative Association in January 1952, when the co-operative was formed and the business purchased from Toronto Type Foundry Limited. He filled that office until he was appointed to the new position.

Prairie Publishers is a co-operative owned and operated by editors and publishers of the weekly newspapers in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Their objectives are to provide services and manufactured products required in the publishing and printing of weekly newspapers.

The major product is what is known

as "ready print." This is a co-operative printed section of weekly newspapers with blank pages on which the local paper is printed in the town of publication. By owning and controlling the



J. A. Vopni

production of this "ready print," weekly publishers are not only assured of a continuance of the service, but have a voice in the policy and selection of the reading matter carried in that section of their local newspapers.

Other services include the production of pictures on plastic which are used in the printing of weekly newspapers, typesetting for the trade, and manufacture of a variety of materials used by the printing trade."

The Icelandic Canadian extends congratulations to this distinguished newspaperman. —**T. O. S. T.**

FJALLKONAN 1956



MRS. ARNHEIÐUR EYOLFSON

Maid of the Mountains at the Icelandic Celebration,
Gimli, Manitoba, August 6, 1956

THE ICELANDIC CELEBRATION AT GIMLI

This year the Icelandic Celebration at Gimli was unusually successful.

The Maid of the Mountains, "Fjallkonan" was Mrs. Ragnheiður Eyolfsson, daughter of the well known poet of "New Iceland" Guttormur Guttormsson. Her address, in choice Icelandic, was delivered with feeling—a feeling arising from the inevitable widening of the gap between the people of Iceland and Canadians and Americans of Icelandic descent. She struck a responsive chord in the hearts of all when she said:

"Some may think that I make demands on my descendants, born here, but that is not correct. I make no demands on them but they are a part of me, and if they were nothing to me I would be doing violence to my deepest obligation, the duty of a mother."

Björn Sigurbjörnsson proposed a toast to Iceland. A student from Iceland at the University of Manitoba, he graduated last spring winning the Gold Medal in Agriculture. He is at present working on his M.A. at the U of Man.

In his address Mr. Sigurbjörnsson stressed the reclamation work that had been instituted in Iceland a short time ago under an organization called "Sandgræðsla Íslands", the Reclamation of Sand Covered Lands. Canadians are familiar with the waste of drifting sands which have formed veritable deserts in the West. In Iceland there is the even greater devastation of lava cinders and ashes from its volcanoes, notably Mt. Hecla. The speaker said that up to the present the organization had directed its main activities to the sand covered areas. This, he

said, was done by fencing them off so that sheep would not graze on them, fertilizer was put in the more barren spots and they were then sown with selected grass seeds. Up to the present over 200,000 acres have been reclaimed in this way. This, the speaker said, is but the beginning of a long range reclamation program.

"A toast to Iceland" he concluded, "is not only a toast to the old Iceland, from which many of you had to flee, but also a toast to the new Iceland, as it is today, and what it will become."

Valdimar Bjornson, former Treasurer of Minnesota and a candidate for the same office in the present American elections, delivered an address with an introduction in Icelandic and the main address in English. He emphasized the stubborn self-reliance of Manitoba's pioneers and their faith in the future of the new land which they had decided to make their home.

"There is less certainty that modern Iceland's self-reliance and faith in a future of subsiding world tension will prove equally well grounded," the speaker continued. His reference was to the demand of a parliamentary majority in the last Althing of Iceland which forced an election last June, that United States troops be withdrawn from the Nato base at Keflavik. The groups favoring the withdrawal were returned with a majority in the new Althing. Mr. Bjornson sketched some of the developments leading to the election results and the formation of the present coalition government. The confusing results were highlighted the Friday before, (Aug 4) the speaker said, by the Nato Council's note

warning Iceland not to insist on troop withdrawals. Mr. Bjornson, a veteran of four years' U.S. Navy duty in Iceland, has twice returned there on government missions since the war.

"Snap judgments reached abroad as to extremist political views in Iceland", continued the speaker, "must be weighed against some peculiar features of the present situation. Imagine, for example, an electoral system where the nation's strongest party, the pro-Nato Conservatives, polling 43 per cent of the vote, gets only 19 parliamentary seats, while a combination of two other parties, demanding troop withdrawal, polling just a third of the vote, gets 25 seats."

"Iceland's expected discussion", Bjornson continued, "of the Nato Council's note with its members in Paris

will obviously be followed widely with the greatest interest."*

Paying tribute particularly to the largest group of New Iceland pioneers who arrived at Gimli 80 years ago, the Minnesotan said their descendants have a heightened appreciation of the Icelandic cultural heritage, even the survival of the language in settlements here grows more difficult.

Heimir Thorgrimson read a poem composed by himself for the occasion.

After the close of the formal programme a large group, led by the Mayor of the Mountains, marched to the Cairn erected in memory of the pioneers and she and the Mayor of Gimli joined in laying a wreath at the foot of the cairn.

W. J. L.

* Press despatches to hand have not indicated that such discussions have taken place. —E

Snjolaug Sigurdson Returns to Winnipeg

Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson, widely known Winnipeg pianist who has been studying, playing and teaching in New York for the past ten years, returned to Winnipeg in August, intent on carrying on her work in her home city.

Miss Sigurdson was trained in Winnipeg by Eva Clare, and went to New York to study with the famed Australian-born pianist Ernest Hutcheson, former president of the Juilliard School of Music. Mr. Hutcheson suggested that Miss Sigurdson start teaching while she continued her studies with him.

It was while under his instruction that Miss Sigurdson made her New York debut in 1950. She has also given two recitals in Carnegie recital hall and has accompanied several artists in Town Hall, including Winnipeg-born violinist Pearl Palmason.

She has also acted as accompanist in New York for Mischa Mishakoff, for-

mer concertmaster of the NBC Symphony orchestra.

After Ernest Hutcheson died in 1951 Miss Sigurdson continued her studies with Muriel Kerr, a Canadian Hutcheson pupil, and more recently with Gordon Stanley at the Juilliard School of Music.

Miss Sigurdson made her home in Brooklyn and had her piano studies there and in Long Island. She presented her pupils annually for the past several years in recitals in New York's Steinway Hall.

She has returned home to visit her family every year since she left, with the exception of 1954, when she went to visit relatives in Iceland, and gave a recital in Reykjavik.

She has given CBC recitals from Winnipeg on several of these visits home, including a series of five violin and-piano recitals with Pearl Palmason one summer. Her last public recital here was given in September of 1955.

THE COVER VERSES

The cover verses are the first and the last verse in a poem entitled "Hret", translated by Mrs. Jakobina Johnson under the title "Regret." Jakobina Johnson needs no introduction to readers of The Icelandic Canadian. The author of the poem, Benedikt Gröndal, was one of the later of the nineteenth century literary men of Iceland. His masterpiece in prose is "Heljarlóðarorusta", a burlesque on the battle of Solferino (1859), a village in Lombardy, Italy. It is not the content so much as the style and originality in treatment that places this commentary in a category by itself in Icelandic literature. Only one sentence need be quoted to show the satirical vein:

"Vestr af Noregi liggur Atlantshaf;

REGRET (HRET)

Translated by JAKOBINA JOHNSON

Roses and the lilies have wilted away,
Summer skies changed to a shadowy gray.
Dreary the forest and leafless the trees,
Proudly that swayed in the wandering breeze.

Naked and moaning the trees meet the gale,
Still lies the brook in a desolate vale.
Gone from the heavens the warm tears that
flow,
—Changed by the frost into hailstones or snow.

Gone art thou likewise, and dry with my years,
Loved and comforting fountain of tears.
Blessing and soothing—a world-healing force,
Thou wert a boon from a heavenly source.

Soft as the dew was thy touch on my cheek,
Solace and friend that our childhood may seek.
Peace would re-enter and sorrow depart,
Anger and pain would die out in my heart..

Soft rests the dew on the flowers at morn,
Down to the earth by its weight they are borne.
Looking again when the sun travels high,
Pure and refreshed to the beautiful sky.

þar liggur Ísland; þar er þjóðólfr og
þar er fjarkláðinn mikli."

"West of Norway lies the Atlantic ocean; there is Iceland; in Iceland is þjóðólfr and there is the terrible sheep-mange. (Þjóðólfur was a leading newspaper of the day and, as most newspapers, had its friends and enemies.)

The word "hret" the title to the poem selected, means a drizzle or sleet in which the snowflakes, instead of being half melted, have been beaten into fine particles of ice. Figuratively the word connotes chill; that is what the poet felt as he mused on what had passed and was no more. Mrs. Johnson skillfully transmits this feeling in the word "Regret." The verses translated and the original of those verses follow.

HRET

Eftir BENEDIKT GRÖNDAL

Fölnuð er liljan, og fölnuð er rós,
fölnað er himinsins blessaða ljós;
hnípin er skógur og hnigið er bar,
hám sem að áður á björkunum var.

Stynja nú biturri stofnar í hrið
stírðnaður lækur í blómlausri hlið;
himinninn fær ei að fella nein tár —
frostri hann grætur, það hagl er og snjár.

Eins ertu þornuð af augunum mín,
ástsæla táranna lind, sem að skín
annars í heiminum huggunarrik;
himnanna drykk ertu sannlega lík!

Viðkvæma, barnlega vætti hún kinn,
var það hinn einasti huggarinn minn;
út streymdi sorgin, og inn streymdi ró;
eymdin og reiðin í hjartanu dó.

Allt eins og drög vætir ilmblómin ung,
ofan þau hneigjast að jörðunni þung,
rísa svo aptur í cyglóar yl,
upprisn lypta sjer himinsins til:

Thus when the sorrows brought night to my heart,
Tears, like the dewfall, would heavily start.
Few were my years, and that dewfall in truth,
Driven away by the sun of my youth.

Out on the moors in a wintery gale,
Tears falling warm prove of little vail.
—Only our youth knows that sudden relief,
Flowery season—in passing too brief.

Heavenly Father, my childhood restore,
Make me contented and carefree once more.
Grant me those tears with their comforting flow
—Grant that they change not to hailstones or snow.

Dögginn svo harmanna brauzt mjer um þá
blikandi æskunnar huggunartár;
þá var jeg ungur; jeg gekk mig og grjet,
gráturinn sorgina hverfa mjer ljet.

Lífsins á heiði í helkulda blá
huggun jeg enga af tárunum fæ.
Dögginn er huggandi, þó hún sje þung
þíðir upp líf, meðan rósinn er ung.

Gerðu mig aptur sem áður jeg var,
alvaldi guð, meðan æskan mig bar!
Gefðu mjer aptur hin gullegu tár!
Gefð' að þau verði ekki hagl eða snjár!

“Childhood Days”

By BONNIE JOHNSON

It is sunset and I am back on the farm of my early childhood, the days when life consisted of love, laughter and happiness. How I love going back there today!

To the west the sun is sinking into her bed of glorious colors, just above the trees, and I must go for a walk towards it. The bumblebees in the clover at my feet scare me to a trot, the bright red cranberries beg to be eaten, a patch of yellow daisies reaches out to be picked and the noises of the living woods fill the air.

The sweet scent of flowers pervades as I linger along a bushy path, a cobweb spreads across my face and a twig snaps underfoot. Thus, I walk, lost in dreams, entranced by the perfection of it all.

Suddenly a bell is heard, ringing lazily through the stillness. I remember why I came and with great effort aim quickly for the tinkle. Into an opening where the reed filled slough is bordered by stooping old willows I go. There they are! The cows are wading into the

coolness for a drink or relaxing in leisurely, unconcerned manner (only a cow can.) Soon though they awaken and they must proceed.

The hum of motors fills the air; the milking machine, the pumping machine, the separating machine. The calves moo for their meal and the pigs grunt, the dogs bark, the cats meow and the young horse whinnies. There is bustle within the big airy pleasant house too. Dinner smells fill my nostrils and arouse my stomach.

Then with dusk, the quietness turns as the sun, disappearing behind the silhouetted oak, leaves only the gorgeous red and gold of her coverlet. Farther east the pale and jealous moon looks with envy on the glory of the sun watching it vanish as the sky brings out of her blue velvet, a host of sparkling diamonds.

I must to bed, for tomorrow the dawn comes soon. Till then I can see my childhood prayers and let mother tuck me in to dream of puppies and airplanes and candy coated Easter Eggs, and

They Served in World War II



Cfn. Gordon Everett Peterson

CFN. GORDON EVERETT PETERSON

Born at Elfros, Sask., December 31, 1914. Enlisted in the active Canadian Army February 23, 1942, with the No 1 District Depot A.F. Served in Canada, Central Mediterranean Area, United Kingdom and Continental Europe. He was awarded the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp, Italy Star, France and Germany Star and 1939-1945 Star. Discharged December 1, 1945.

CFN. NORMAN SIGURD PETERSON

Born at Elfros, Sask., August 31, 1913. Enlisted in the Active Canadian Army in the R. C. E. M. E., October 1, 1941. Served in Canada, England, France, Belgium and Holland.

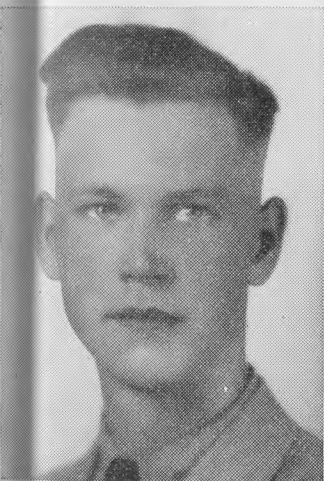
He was awarded the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp, France and Germany Star, and 1939-1945 Star. He was discharged February 7, 1946.



Cfn. Norman Sigurd Peterson

CFN. LEWIS BENEDICT PETERSON

Born at Elfros, Sask., August 1, 1917. Enlisted in the R. C. E. M. E. of the Canadian Army, January 2, 1942. He was stationed at Kitchener, Ontario for basic training, Trades school at London, Ont., Armoured Force school at Fort Knox, Ky. U.S.A., Armoured Force Workshop at Camp Borden, Ont., and Advanced Training at Barrie-field, Ont. In England he was stationed at No. 1 Base Workshop, Borden, Hants. He was discharged February 13, 1946.



Cfn. Lewis Benedict Peterson

Sons of Eric and Nicolena Peterson, Blaine, Wash., U.S.A.



Elmo Arthur Kristjansson



Lloyd Kristjansson

ELMO ARTHUR KRISTJANSSON—Born at Wynyard, Sask., January 13, 1913. Joined the South Saskatchewan Regiment March 2, 1943. He served in France and Germany. While in France he was wounded in the left leg. He was discharged February 28, 1946.

LLOYD KRISTJANSON—Born at Wynyard, Sask., August 13, 1917. Joined the Princess Louise Dragoon Guards, May 1942. He served in England, Italy, France, Belgium and Holland. Discharged November 1945.

CECIL MARNO KRISTJANSON—Born at Wynyard, Sask., October 5, 1921. He joined the Canadian Army, December 15, 1942. He landed in Normandy on D. Day with the Regina Rifle Regiment and was wounded six days later in the left leg. He rejoined his regiment in Holland, January 1945. He was wounded in Germany in May, in the left hip. He was discharged August 1945.

LENNIE DORNE KRISTJANSON—Born at Wynyard, Sask., October 8, 1923. He joined the Royal Canadian Regiment, August 8, 1943. He served in Italy, Holland and Germany. Discharged March 8, 1946.



Cecil Marno Kristjansson



Lennie Dorne Kristjansson

Sons of Mr. Kristjan Sigthor and Mrs. Erika Ingibjorg (Johnson) Kristjansson



Norman Wynston Stocks



Leonard Murray Stocks

NORMAN WYNSTON STOCKS—Born in Saskatoon, Sask., 1910. Joined the Canadian Army and was discharged a few months later on account of heart trouble.

LEONARD MURRAY STOCKS—Born at Merid, Sask., 1915. Joined the Canadian Army. He was discharged several months later on account of bronchitis.

CPL. CLIFFORD ALEXANDER STOCKS—Born at Merid, Sask., 1919. Joined the Royal Canadian Air Force 1940, in the ground crew. Served overseas.

F/O ALLAN GRAHAM STOCKS—Born at Merid, Sask., 1922. Enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force 1942. Served overseas. Discharged 1945.



Cpl. Clifford Alexander Stocks



F/O Allan Graham Stocks

Sons of Mr. Joseph Alexander and Annie Gudrun Stocks, Cut Knife, Sask.

MOONBEAMS

By Friðjón Stefánsson

Translated from the Icelandic

by LILJA DAY (nee Eylands)

The moon strides along in the clouds, throws its beams over land and sea, and then sneers before it hides its face behind a grim looking cloud. Suddenly it peers into the bedroom window of a small farmhouse; stares stiffly at a ball of wool and a half-knit child's sock, and makes the shadow of the ball stretch itself out on the floor like a long black finger.

In a bed to the right of the window lie a couple under a blue striped feather quilt. The farmer slumbers as a tired laborer. Only the heavy droning of his snores disturb the silence of the winter night. The woman is awake. She has become so used to the grating sound of her husband's sleep, that now, after hundreds of nights, she hardly notices it. It has become a fixed part of her sleepless hours, just as the blackness, or her rheumatism, and could not be escaped. Tonight she could not sleep, undoubtedly because of the worry and toil of the past day. The worry saw to it that she had no peace, even when she lay down to rest.

For instance, about the cow getting calving fever now. It was no joyful prospect to have perhaps no milk for the children. But if the cow dies, they will have to get another somehow. He would certainly understand this, as they could not be without milk.

But before she knows it, the cow's calving fever troubles have disappeared and she begins to think of her eldest boy, Einar. He is probably tossing about somewhere out on the seas right now. And she can still see how he

looked that day when he came home from the final examination at school. A tall reddish-haired boy with an aquiline nose. She had really been proud of him then. But his expression had been just as serious as at any other time, as if being first in the examination had no effect on him.

This image gave way to another. Ever one from the first night he spent in this home of his stepfather. She had had a great deal of trouble with him. . . . he was so stubborn. This first evening, there was no way to make him go to sleep. Until now, he had always been used to sleeping with her and she simply could not understand why he could do so no more. But this was his wedding night, and she felt entitled to sleep with her bridegroom, even though the child she had had six years before with a faithless lover was still living on the other side of the partition.

Einar had never liked his stepfather. Perhaps it had been Thor's fault. He did not know how to handle him, and therefore always found him obstinate and whimsical. She had hoped that this would improve with time. But somehow, it had never improved.

She herself had always answered him, because she wanted to be a good mother. But a burdened peasant woman, endlessly exhausted and often pregnant, cannot always have her own way. What hurt her most was when she felt that she was losing the boy's trust little by little after they moved to the farm at Hvammur. It was as if he could not forgive her for marrying Thor, and this pierced her maternal

nderness like a sword. She tried to comfort herself with the thought that when he grew up, he would understand that it was only natural that she would wish to marry, the same as her women. It was another matter entirely, whether she had been right marrying Thor. But this was her personal problem, about which she spoke to no one, except herself, during these long sleepless nights.

Einar had been much too young when he left home . . . only seventeen years, but it had not been with her approval. He had quarrelled with his grandfather. Einar told him clearly and frankly that he would no longer work for him for nothing. And Thor answered that he didn't care if he left, he wasn't going to keep him there against his will. She was sure that Thor later regretted it. But they were both so rigidly stubborn. She had tried everything in her power to make peace between them, and to keep Einar there, but without success. Neither one could yield.

Many years had passed since, and Einar had come home once, on a few days' holidays. They couldn't get along even for those few days. She could not understand Thor as he really wasn't a bad man. It seemed as if he thought that by leaving home the boy had become a criminal.

Yes, Einar had gone to sea. She had often written to him and implored him to come home. He answered her letters and said he certainly would come home sometime when he had a good opportunity. In his first letters, he intimated that he wanted to go to navigation school. That had made her very happy. But as the years passed the letters became fewer, and he did not mention the navigation school any more. Sometimes he sent gifts to her and the little children. And in his

letters he told her the names of the ships he was on from time to time. By then there had been many ships. Once she happened to hear that he was quite a drinker. And the next night she lay awake and wept.

The woman turns her back to her husband. The moon, which has been lurking behind a cloud, now creeps out, shines in her dark eyes, and spreads its pale white beams over her wrinkled cheek. Now she has become an old, worn-out woman, with almost all her teeth gone, and with a red birthmark under her right eye. The farmer's sleep becomes less heavy so that for a moment there is complete silence; then he pulls the feather cover up to his chin and begins to snore a new tune.

The moon has disappeared again; darkness closes in and it begins to rain.



Many hundreds of miles away, a dark coal freighter plows through the choppy seas, and even there the moon sheds its flickering beams.

Einar, the fireman, is just coming off watch and closes the cabin door behind him. He grabs the loop of his hammock with one hand and pulls a wad of string fibre out of his pocket with the other, to wipe the perspiration off his sooty face.

"This damn feeling," he thought out loudly in Icelandic, knowing full well, however, that it was useless to blame anyone but himself for such things. Experience, often repeated, had taught him that this feeling of pain and misery was an inevitable companion of many days of drunkenness.

His cabin mate, a young Englishman, puts down his magazine and says:

"Jeez, you and John were sure flying high last night when you came aboard. I've never seen anything more ridiculous than when you were help-

ing each other down the stairs." He coughed and then added boastfully:

"I was pretty well oiled myself."

Einar looks at him with complete disgust. The idiot! What was so amusing about watching drunk men? These silly boys thought it a real adventure to watch drunk men and be sloshed themselves. They had no idea what alcohol really was to its victims. They did not recognize the warning in the magnetic craving which follows the deadening effect of alcohol, a craving which wipes out all unattained goals, makes all predetermined decisions vanish, evens all paths until there is only one way to go. Instead, they stood at a distance and laughed like stupid, wicked children.

"Well my boy, were we really?" he says and throws the wad of string up into the hammock. He is going to say something else, but just then the explosion comes.

Before he knows it, he is lying flat on the floor of the cabin. Everything trembles in the terrible shaking, and the lights go out. He crawls to his feet and grabs the shoulder of his cabin mate, who yells with fright.

"Up on deck!"

The siren blows incessantly. The engine has stopped and the bow of the ship sinks rapidly as if it were being pulled by some unseen power. Through the screaming of the siren he can hear the deep voice of the captain on the bridge, and a piercing cry of pain from the front deck. Someone has been hurt in the blast. Perhaps someone has been killed?

They manage to get only one of the

lifeboats afloat as the ship sinks just a few minutes. Those who not get into it throw themselves the sea.

Einar is one of them. He has hold of a lifebelt, and is swimming with all his might away from the sinking ship. The sea is very rough, he finds it very difficult to keep head above water. The further he away from those in the boat the louder he calls. But they don't pay any attention to him. Maybe they don't hear him. But as a cloud covers the moon the boat disappears from him for good and all. Little by little his body comes numb with the cold sea. His cries become further and further apart.

His surroundings are nothing but sea, and endless rows of waves which rise and fall, splash themselves, fight and gush over him like a water wheel take him under and fill his senses, hold him up on their backs, only to throw him down into a deep valley the next moment.

He realizes now that there is nothing ahead but death. But behind he lies his life like a trail over a snow-covered heath. And as he struggles to get his breath in a hopeless battle with death, suddenly he pictures a woman with a mark below her right eye, a woman to whom he owes his life.

★

But just when his journey across the heath has come to an end, a weary peasant woman falls asleep after a long sleepless night. She sleeps with her mouth slightly open and dreams that her Einar has come home at last.

IN THE NEWS

THE PROFESSOR ARRIVES

A Professor has been appointed to Department of Icelandic Language and Literature in the University of Manitoba. He is **Haraldur Bessason**, now at Kýrholti in Skagafjörður in North of Iceland, April 14, 1931. After graduating from a college in Akureyri, the chief centre in the North of Iceland, Haraldur Bessason attended the University of Iceland in Reykjavík, specializing in Icelandic Language and Literature. He received his Master's degree last Spring.

Haraldur married Ásgerður Haraldsdóttir of Reykjavík and they have two daughters, one born in 1954 and the other one this year.

Professor Bessason arrived in Winnipeg on August 25, last and brought his family with him. They reside at Ste. Anne's, 14 B, Garry Manor, and their telephone number is 42-77112.

The Icelandic Canadian welcomes the new Professor and his family and wishes him success in the responsible position he has accepted. Members of the Magazine Committee are looking forward to meeting him and hope that in the near future they will hear him at some public gathering.

★

ICELANDIC PAINTER EXHIBITS IN ITALY

Gudmundur Gudmundsson, a young Icelandic painter originally from Kirkjubæjarklaustri, Iceland, last summer held an exhibition of his works in Milan, Italy, which drew wide attention.

Mr. Gudmundsson first studied art in Iceland and for the past four years has been studying abroad, first in Oslo, Norway, under Storsteinn, and

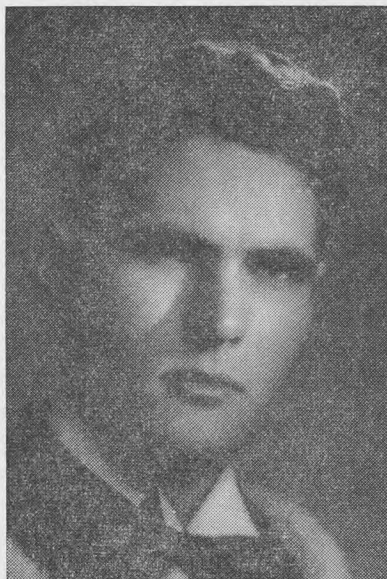
latterly in Italy.

Mr. Gudmundsson held his Milan exhibition at the urging and with the aid of the noted Italian painter Renato Birolli. The exhibition took place in Milan's Montenapoleone Gallery.

There was large attendance at the exhibition and five of Mr. Gudmundsson's oils were purchased by viewers, two of these for one of Milan's best known private collections. Critics lauded him as an artist.

Mr. Gudmundsson has now been invited to exhibit his works in Rome. The exhibition will likely be held this fall, following which he is expected to return to Iceland.

★



Dr. Louis Lorne Campbell

Dr. Louis Lorne Campbell, a young Winnipeg scientist is a member of a team which worked on a new radio transmission discovery just released from the Canadian Government's secret list.

The team, headed by Dr. P. A. Forsyth of Saskatoon, worked four years at Shirley Bay Laboratories of the Defence Research Board's radio physics department, and has now perfected transmission by the electron-trails of tiny meteors.

Messages up to 1,000 miles can now be sent at extreme speed using a frequency relatively free from other radio interference. This will provide the armed forces, and possibly civilian users, with a reliable lower-power form of communication.

Having discovered that the trails of meteors can reflect radio waves and after locating suitable meteor trails 60 miles above the earth's surface, the scientists transmitted radio messages to distant ground receivers by bouncing the waves off the trails of highly-charged meteor particles.

Hundreds of meteors penetrate the earth's atmosphere daily. Tiny meteors—the size of a pinhead—with highly charged trails are used because they are most common.

Louis Lorne Campbell graduated in the spring of 1950 from the University of Manitoba with a B.Sc. (Honors) degree. He took the five-year Honors Course in physics and mathematics.

On graduating from Kelvin High School (Grade XI) he won an Isbister Scholarship and also won a scholarship in each of his first four undergraduate years at the University.

After his graduation from the university, Lorne was awarded a National Research Council scholarship of \$450, but did not accept it as he had obtained a Fellowship at Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa, of \$75 a month for nine months plus tuition. This gave him a chance to start working on his Master's degree.

Lorne is the son of Mr. and Mrs.

E. S. Campbell of Winnipeg. Mr. Campbell is Jónína Solveig, daughter of the late Arni and Guðríður Jónsson, who lived at 737 Alverstone in Winnipeg.

★

ICELANDIC R.C.M.P. CONSTABLE WINS MUSICAL HONORS

The following news item from the Toronto Star last spring tells of the singing success of Constable Glen Skaftfeld of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Constable Skaftfeld is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Sigurdur Skaftfeld of Shaunavon, Sask., where he attended high school and received his early musical training. Mr. Skaftfeld senior was a 25 years leader of the United Church choir at Shaunavon.

Says the Toronto Star item:

"An RCMP constable who specializes in tracking drug offenders and who has no intention of giving up his career, has become an overnight singing sensation here.

Cons. Glen Skaftfeld, who regards singing only as a hobby, won top singing laurels Saturday in the Hamilton Music Festival. He took first place in three men's vocal classes and a third prize in a fourth class, to capture the Austin McDonald trophy for the best senior male voice in the Kiwanis club events.

Thirty, round-faced and handsome Skaftfeld is a bass baritone. He has been taking lessons for four years. Before that he sang with church choirs in Vancouver and Edmonton and Saskatchewan.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP PRESENTED



Mrs. H. F. Danielson

At a recent meeting of the Jon Sig-

urdson Chapter, I. O. D. E. Mrs. H. F. Danielson was made a Primary Life Member for efficient service rendered during the 14 years she has been secretary of the chapter.

A message of congratulations was extended from the Municipal Chapter by the Regent, Mrs. Errick F. Willis.

★

GOLDEN WEDDING

Mr. and Mrs. John Johnson, 866 Winnipeg Ave., celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Wednesday, August 8, when they were at home to relatives and friends.

They were married in Winnipeg, in 1906. Mrs. Johnson is the former Maria Valdason of Brandon. Mr. Johnson was employed by Canadian Pacific Railways until his retirement 10 years ago. There are seven children: Mrs. A. E. Ramberg, Kenora; Mrs. A. W. Roberts, Seattle; Mrs. F. Gold, Pine Falls; Mrs. R. Hutton, Mrs. A. V. Hart, Aurora, and Bergman, of Winnipeg.

FOR ANY YEAR

Now is the stillness

now the winds hold back
their tactless repetitions of the years.

The shadow of the ruin stretches endlessly
across the silent plain.

What can we give the waiting winds,
what answer can we make

Not made already—not already blown
back in our faces?

Somewhere must be light

To cast as large a shadow as the world's . . .
Somewhere.

Before us?

There is none behind us.

The whole time in a strange penumbra stands,
The clock ticks,

but its hands are human hands.

Esther Wellington

Graduates and Scholarship Winners

GRADUATES WITH HIGH HONORS

On June 4, last **Miss Nancy Lou Olafson**, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Sveinbjorn Olafson of South St. Paul, Minn., received the degree of Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Hamline University, St. Paul.

Nancy attended West Jr. High School in Duluth, Minn. where she won both the gold and silver medals in speech contests and also ranked first in a city-wide poetry reading division.

She graduated with honors in 1952 from Edison High School in Minneapolis. She was elected to the National Honor Society, Quill and Scroll; was a member of the National Journalistic Society, an Associate Editor of the Edison Record (weekly school paper), and member of Edison Leadership Club.

She played clarinet in the Edison concert band and was a member of the Robinsdale city band during the summer. This latter band won first place in the Minneapolis Aquatennial Parade.

Miss Olafsson is at present finishing clinical procedures at Asbury Methodist Hospital in Minneapolis, where she expects to take a position following the state board examinations.

★

Miss Ruth Fern Olson of Coaldale, Alta. was this year awarded the University of Alberta Faculty of Education first class standing award of \$25 for students in first year education and also a university scholarship of \$100. Miss Olson is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. B. Olson of Vancouver, B. C., formerly of Langruth, Man. She is continuing her studies in Calgary.

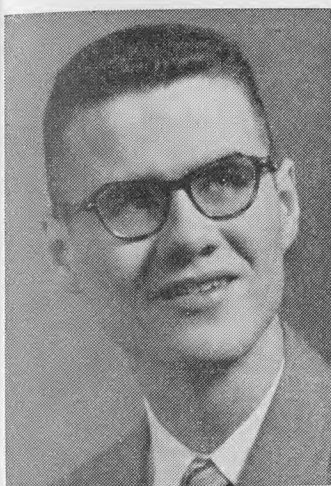


Miss Ruth Fern Olson

While in Grade 12 she won the scholarship for highest average in Lethbridge Division No 7 and the Canadian Sugar Factory scholarship for Grade 12 students.

★

Eight young women of Icelandic descent graduated from the Manitoba Provincial Normal School, Winnipeg in June of this year. They are: **Sylvia Una Einarson**, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Einarson, Winnipeg, Man., **Edith Lenore Holm**, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. V. Holm, Husavik, Man., **Mabel Joyce Johnson**, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Johnson, Roblin, Man., **Evelyn K. Kristjanson**, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kristj. Kristjanson, Winnipeg, Man., **Jo Monsina Sandven** and **Solveig Dorot Sandven**, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Lars Sandven, Portage la Prairie, Man., **Halldora May Sopher**, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Valdi Sopher, Selkirk, Man., **Gladys Wilhelmina Sprin**, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Sprin, Riverton, Man.



Kenneth Vilhelm Paulson, 23, of Winnipeg this year won a Winnipeg Tribune bursary of \$300 for study in fourth year science. He intends to obtain a Master's degree in physics and do nuclear or electronic research work. Kenneth is the son of Bjorg, nee Bjornsson, formerly of Foam Lake, Sask., and the late Paul Paulson of Mouse River, N. D.

★



Donald Johnson of Winnipeg this year was awarded the Manitoba Telephone System scholarship of \$125 and

the Royal Canadian Air Force Auxiliary Memorial Scholarship of \$90 for highest aggregate in electrical engineering at the University of Manitoba. Donald is the son of Fjóla (nee Kristjansson), and the late Paul Johnson, formerly of Lundar, Man.

★



Wilbur Jacob Jonsson of Winnipeg, 19, has won a Winnipeg Tribune bursary of \$300 for study in fourth year science. He intends to specialize in actuarial mathematics and has been employed this summer in the statistical department of a life insurance company in Winnipeg. Last year he won a Winnipeg Tribune bursary of \$250. His spare time favorite is chess and he is president of the University of Manitoba Chess Club and an incoming governor of the Chess Federation of Canada. His other interest is astronomy and he is a member of the Royal Astronomical Society. Wilbur is the grandson of Thora and the late Gisli Jonsson, formerly of Gimli, Man.



Heather Alda Sigurdson of Winnipeg was awarded the Jon Sigurdson I.O.D.E. scholarship in music by the University of Manitoba this year. Heather studies both voice and piano and is a Grade 11 student at Daniel McIntyre Collegiate in Winnipeg. She is a daughter of Begga, nee Guttormson, and Joe Sigurdson, 944 Garfield Street.

★



Miss Anna Gudrun Johnson, Grade 12 student at Gimli Collegiate Institute, was awarded an Isbister Scholar-

ship this year. Miss Johnson, who is 17, is a daughter of Steinun, nee hannsson, and the late Thorvald Bergsveinn Johnson of Gimli.

★

Hjalmar Johnson of Winnipeg graduated in medicine at the University of Manitoba this spring with honors. Dr. Johnson was born at Regina, Man., October 18, 1930, the son of Sigríður (Larsson) and Magnús Johnson, formerly of Arnes and Regina. He is a descendant of Bólu Hjalmarsson, one of Iceland's noted poets. Dr. Johnson will serve as senior intern at Winnipeg General Hospital during the coming year.

★

Vilhjálmur Einarson from Landakottar, Egilstodum, Iceland, graduated in spring with a Bachelor of Arts degree with honors from Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, U.S.A. Einarson is a graduate of the Akureli College, Iceland, where he won a scholarship entitling him to attend Dartmouth College.

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NEWS SUMMARY

The Jon Sigurdson Chapter I.O.D.E., Winnipeg, this year established a Scholarship of \$50 to be called the Elinborg Hanson Scholarship, in tribute to the late Elinborg Hanson, one of the chapter's first organizers. This Scholarship is to be awarded annually to a Grade 11 student in Big Island High School at Hecla, Man., which was adopted by the Jon Sigurdson chapter, into two years ago.

★

Byron Hjørleifson, 17, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Hjørleifson, farmer in the Edgerton district, who served as deckhand on the tug "Clearwater" which was found wrecked on Lake Athabasca, is still missing. Search for eight men believed drowned when the Northern Transportation Co., tug "Clearwater" sank August 27th, on Lake Athabasca has been abandoned.

★

Dennis Eyolfson was chosen by Daniel McIntyre Collegiate, Winnipeg, to represent his school at the United Nations Seminar at the University of Manitoba July 10 to 14 this year. Lillian Bjarnason was chosen alternate. Dennis is the son of Mrs. Arnheiður Eyolfson, 1025 Dominion Street, and Lillian is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hafsteinn Bjarnason, 85 Ingersoll Street.

★

Miss Valdin G. Johnson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. Johnson of Winnipeg, left in August for France where she will be teacher at a school in Metz or children of Royal Canadian Air

Force and Royal Air Force personnel. Miss Johnson's term at the Metz school is for two years. Born at Piney, Man., Miss Johnson received her education there and at St. Jean Baptiste and took her normal training at the Manitoba Provincial Normal School, Winnipeg. She has taught at Wood Bay, Clearwater, and the RCAF public school at Fort Churchill as well as Winnipeg.

★

The Lutheran Church at Lundar, Manitoba, celebrated its 50th anniversary on Sunday, July 29, this year. Services were held in the church, morning and afternoon, conducted by the pastor, Rev. Bragi Fridriksson, following which a concert and reception were held in the Community Hall. The Lundar charge was organized by Rev. Runolfur Marteinsson of Winnipeg in 1906 and the church dedicated on August 2, 1914. In the interim a congregation had served the community with Rev. Jon Jónsson as pastor.

★

A collection of films and recordings depicting the way of life in Icelandic communities in Canada and the United States was given to Professor Finnboði Guðmundsson on his departure for Iceland this summer, to be presented to the National Museum in Iceland on behalf of the University of Manitoba. This gift is to commemorate the arrival of the first Icelandic settlers in America in 1855 and the 900th anniversary of the establishment of the Bishopric and School at Skálholt in Iceland.

Review of Sketches of the South of Iceland

Svipmyndir af Suðurlandi

RICHARD BECK,

Skálholt, the ancient bishopric and seat of learning in the south of Iceland close to sixty miles east of Reykjavík, has been much before the Icelandic people the last two years. And well it might be. In June this year the ninth centennial of the founding of Skálholt was celebrated and the cornerstone laid on a restored Skálholt.

One of the important events in the preparation for this historic occasion was a service held on the ancient site of Skálholt on Sunday, July 18, 1954. Dr. Richard Beck, Head of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages in the University of North Dakota, was an invited guest at the service and delivered one of the addresses. That summer Dr. and Mrs. Beck took time off, on their extended trip in Europe, to travel across the southern districts of Iceland. In a brochure of 27 pages, which he entitles "Svipmyndir af Suðurlandi", Sketches of the South of Iceland, Dr. Beck relates in his usual enthusiastic way his impressions of some of the places in the south of Iceland which are so rich in its story. The address delivered at Skálholt is included in the booklet.

At his own expense Dr. Beck printed 500 copies most of which he sent to Iceland and donated to the Skálholt Society, which has been in charge of all preparatory work for the re-building of Skálholt. The gift was gratefully accepted by the Society and its appreciation conveyed to the author by the President, Professor Sigurbjörn Einarsson.

Dr. Beck did, however, retain a few copies which are available at \$1.00 each

and may be obtained from him at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, N. Dak. Whatever is received from such sales will be donated to the Skálholt Society. The author fittingly concludes a brief preface to the booklet in these words: "In this way Mrs. Beck and I have been able to repay a small part of the cultural debt we owe to Skálholt."

This brochure should be a part of the material people will want to have to serve on the steps that have been taken leading to the re-establishment of the famous bishopric and seat of learning at Skálholt. —W. J. L.

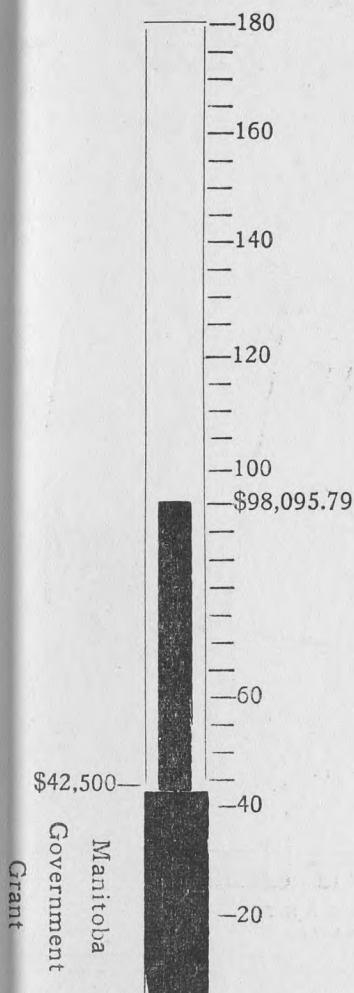


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The Building Committee has been authorized to proceed with the construction of the new wing and tenders are being called for plumbing and heating, and electrical fixtures and wiring.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Icelandic Canadian regrets that Arthur M. Reykdal has found it necessary to withdraw from the Magazine Committee but is glad to inform its readers that Arthur has obtained a responsible position in his chosen line of work with the publishers of a weekly newspaper, in Atikoken, Ont., called The Atikoken Progress. The members of the Board wish him every success in that rapidly growing mining town.

At the same time The Icelandic Canadian is happy to announce that



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WINNIPEG

Mrs. Arnheiður Eyolfson has joined the staff. She is a daughter of the well known poet Guttormur Guttormsson and Mrs. Guttormsson, of Riverton, Man., where Mrs. Eyolfson was born and spent her childhood years. What she has contributed to this, the first issue after joining the staff, augurs well for the future. It may be that here we have more evidence of the truth of that beautiful old Icelandic saying, "sjaldan fellur eplið langt frá

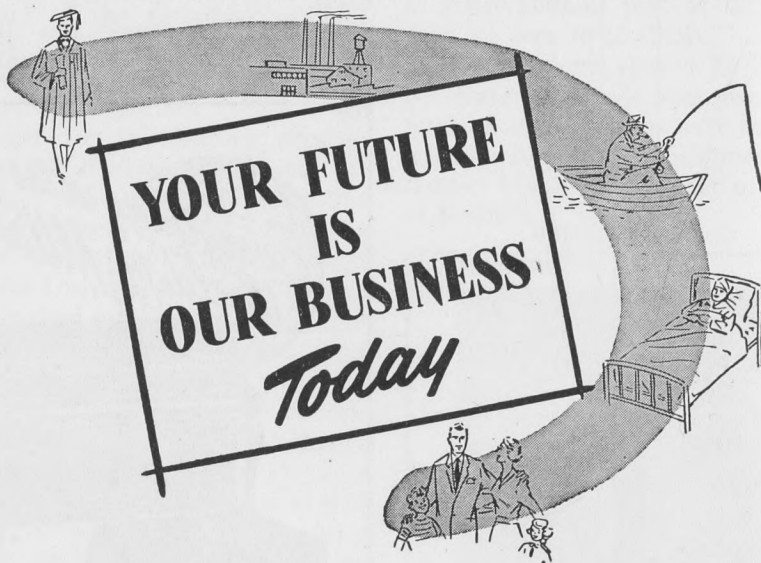
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